

Political Notebook by George Pascoe-Watson

David Cameron will succeed Gordon Brown as Britain's 53rd Prime Minister on May 7, according to polling king Peter Kellner.

But the YouGov President believes Mr Cameron will lead a minority government and will have to go back to the country for a second general election later this year or early in 2011.

These are Mr Kellner's private views and he stresses they come with a strong health warning.

Nothing is certain thanks to the unpredicted, and unpredictable Nick Clegg LibDem bounce.

Mr Kellner made his predictions at a special seminar at Portland's London HQ today.

He forecasts the LibDems will see their recent poll rating of around 30% fall back to early or mid-20s and the Conservatives will have the largest number of seats - around 280-300.

This will be enough to make Gordon Brown resign sometime on May 7.

Mr Cameron will then openly invited Mr Clegg to help form a government but he will do so in a letter designed to get a "no thanks" response from the LibDem leader.

There would follow a Queen's Speech and an emergency Budget which Mr Cameron could safely assume will not be opposed by Labour and the LibDems.

Both Mr Brown and Mr Clegg would be too scared of infuriating the nation by forcing an immediate second election - one in which they would be punished for putting the country through more upheaval.

Mr Kellner's prediction is that a Cameron Premier would eventually go onto win a second general election comfortably, enjoying a significant increase in the number of Tory MPs.

But here's how things could develop in a way which would change British history for ever.

The LibDems have always been seen as a wasted vote by millions in a general election.

Voters know they have no choice of forming a government so they choose the Tories or Labour instead.

But what if that was to change?

What if the polls remain high for Mr Clegg and voters realize power is within his grasp?

Another strong showing by the LibDem leader in this Thursday's Sky News showdown may turn a bubble into a bandwagon.

Postal votes will be sent off at the beginning of next week and that could cement a LibDem surge.

This could lead to a Liberal Democrat government and Mr Kellner admits it's a scenario he cannot rule out - though he believes it won't happen.

The question is whether or not Mr Clegg's success since last Thursday's TV debate is a bandwagon or a bubble.

A bubble will burst and it will be the Conservatives, not Labour, who will benefit, he says.

Pollsters think the LibDem surge is a protest vote against the established parties with them taking two votes from the Tories for every one they take from Labour.

But the protest will become a choice when voters enter the ballot box - and that's when the bubble will burst as the electorate revert to who they think has a chance of governing.

One worrying revelation for the political editors and editors however - the traditional 10pm exit poll on polling night may be rendered useless.

All the broadcasters have clubbed together for the same snapshot as the polls close - and this year it may be very wide of the mark because of local issues which won't be picked up.

The 10pm exit poll is the one used by all newspapers to lead the main results edition before a single vote is counted.

Without it, it's hard to see how any newspaper can make an accurate prediction on the night.

Join me in the build-up to the election on Twitter - http://twitter.com/gpw_portland